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A 9

SERMON

On the 22*d* of *February*, 1674,

AT THE

FUNERAL

OF A

NEIGHBOUR.

WHEREIN

The appointed time, and manner of Man's death, are Treated of, and consider'd.

By *W. C.* Minister of God's Word, in a Parish in the West part of *Somersetshire.*

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THE *Author of this Sermon being a Lover of Humility, had no ambition or purpoſe to deliver a written Copy thereof: but it was obtained from him by the very earneſt deſire and importunity of one of his Friends and Neighbours.*

Heb. IX. 27.

And it is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this the judgment.

THere is nothing of greater importance unto any Man or Woman living, than ſo to ſteer their courſe, and order their affairs while they are in this World, as that they may infallibly attain eternal Life and Happineſs with Almighty God in the World to come: No man can poſſibly deny this, but he muſt abſolutely quit his Reaſon. And there are no matters to be conſidered of, more uſeful and conducible unto this moſt neceſſary and bleſſed purpoſe, than Death and Judgment; for when a man ſhall ſeriouſly bethink with himſelf, That after he hath ſpent a little while here in this World, he muſt dye; and not only ſo, but immediately paſs from death, to a ſevere and ſtrict account before Gods higheſt Tribunal, about all the paſſages and particulars of his whole Life, and anſwer there for every thought, word and action, not one of them excepted; and according to the account which he ſhall render about them, whether good or bad, he is preſently to undergo an irrevocable doom and ſentence, either of Glory or Torment; he will think himſelf highly concerned to examin throughly his Life, and find out how his matters ſtand, to caſt a mournful and penitent reflection upon whatſoever he diſcovers to be amiſs, to ſteer to his utter-

moſt againſt preſent evils, and to uſe the beſt care he can to prevent ſins for the time to come; his heart will be moſt wofully perplexed and afflicted, until he hath made his peace with God, ſued out his pardon, got his Soul waſh'd white with the Blood of Chriſt, his nature changed, his heart renewed, his life reſtored, his accounts ready, and himſelf prepared to avoid that condemnation, and to obtain that abſolution; both which, are but a little way before him.

Theſe two infinitely Soul-concerning points, (*viz.*) Death and Judgment, are offered to our ſerious meditation, and practical improvement, in the words which I have now choſen for my Text. They are brought in by way of Similitude, and do make up a *Protaſis*, or firſt part of the Similitude; the *Apodoſis* or latter part of the Similitude, in the following *Verſe* and words after my Text, compleats and perfects them. The whole runs thus: *And as it is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this the judgment: So Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many, and unto them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation.*

The occaſion of the Similitude (part of which is my Text) take briefly thus.

The great drift of this Epiſtle, is to exalt the Prieſthood of Chriſt above the Prieſthood of *Aaron*; thereby more effectually to draw off the *Hebrews* from this obſervation of the *Levitical* Ordinances, (unto which they were too much inclined) unto the ſimplicity of the Goſpel (unto which they were ſomewhat too averſe) to prevent the danger of their Apoſtacy from the Faith of Chriſt, unto which they were like to be ſore urged and tempted by the force of perſecution.

To compaſs this deſign, the Apoſtle ſets forth in this Epiſtle

piſtle the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt, both as to his Perſon and Prieſthood.

1. In his Perſon: In the firſt part of the Epiſtle he ſhews that Chriſt, in reſpect of his Perſon, was above men and Angels: That he was not meer man, but God-man in one perſon, and the very Son of God by eternal Generation, *Chap.* 1. That by his miniſtry the Law was given, not only as God, *Chap.* 1, but alſo as Man, *Ch.* 2. That his Office was above *Moſes* his Office, *Chap.* 3. And *Chap.* 3, and 4, he threatens them, if they ſhould not embrace and ſtick to Chriſts Doctrine.

2. In his Prieſthood: The Apoſtle ſhews *Chap.* 5, that Chriſts Prieſthood was above the *Levitical* Prieſthood, and that he was a more excellent High Prieſt than either *Aaron* or any of his Succeſſors. In *Chap.* 9, he ſets up Chriſt above *Aaron*, or any of his Order, on many accounts (*Ex. Gr.*)

1. They were but Types, and he the Antitype; they ſhadowed and figured out him, ſo that Chriſt as far exceeds them, as the ſubſtance doth the ſhadow.

2. The Blood offer'd by the *Aaronical* High-Prieſts, was the blood of Bulls and Goats; but the Blood which this High Prieſt offer'd, was his own perſonal Blood; theirs purg'd only the Fleſh, his the Conſcience, *Verſ.* 13, 14.

3. They carried their Blood into the Holieſt made with hands (*viz.*) the innermoſt part of the Tabernacle; but Chriſt had carried his into Heaven it ſelf, the truly *Sanctum Sanctorum* a place made without hands, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, and was there appearing in the preſence of God for us; as he ſhews, *Verſ.* 14.

4. And Laſtly, Whereas the High Prieſts under the Law offered often, and went once every year into the Holieſt of all; Chriſt only offered his Sacrifice once for all,

all, and went but once into Heaven, and there he abides, *Verſ.* 26. And to prove that this is ſufficient, he makes uſe of this Similitude (part of which my Text is) and ſheweth that Chriſt neither could nor ſhould ſuffer oftner than once, from the common Law laid upon man of dying once; which Law, Chriſt whoſe perſon was infinitely more excellent than the perſons of all men put together, ſatisfied this Law: I ſay, ſo excellent a perſon as Chriſt having once ſatisfied by dying, when he offered up himſelf, there is no reaſon he ſhould offer himſelf again, and ſo dye again. But as judgment follows death, ſo Chriſt having at his firſt appearance born the ſins of his Elect, and as their Surety ſatisfied Gods Juſtice for them by his once dying; So his next appearance would be to judgment, when and where, as a glorious Judg, and Lord Chief Juſtice of Heaven, he would finally and openly before men and Angels, juſtifie and abſolve all his elect and true members from their ſins, and adjudg them unto Heaven and Salvation: My Text holds forth to our ſerious conſideration, Two moſt material and Soul-concerning points.

1. Death in the firſt branch of the Text: *It is appointed unto man once to dye.*

2. *Judgment*, in the laſt clauſe: *And after this the judgment.*

So that the Doctrines contained for our inſtruction and ſpiritual improvement, are theſe Two (*viz.*)

1. *Doctrine*, That death is a thing appointed by God unto all men; or God hath appointed that all men ſhall once dye.

2. *Doctrine*, That there is a judgment beyond death, and an eternal condition that abideth for all men.

The firſt of theſe ſhall only be treated of at this time.

1. The

1. The first Doctrine, Death is a thing appointed by God unto all men: or, God hath appointed that all men shall once dye.

God (I say) hath appointed it, or Death is a thing that is appointed by God himself: For though this be not Syllabetically expressed in my Text, yet it may be very rationally collected from it: For who shall impose a necessity of dying upon all men, but he who is more than all men, and above all men, who is the maker, preserver, and most rightful owner, Lord, Governor, and supream Judg of all men? And who can this be but God alone? Well then, Death is appointed, and by God it is appointed. If this will not satisfie, we may speak more of it anon.

I shall (God willing) propose unto my self, and prosecute this following method.

First, We shall speak of the thing appointed, namely *Death.*

Secondly, The Persons to whom it is appointed, namely *Men.*

Thirdly, When it was appointed unto them.

Fourthly, Why, and wherefore it is thus appointed unto them.

Fifthly and Lastly, What is the Use which we are to make of it.

1. We shall speak of the thing it self appointed, namely, *Death.*

Death, according to a Philosophical account, may be thus defined; *Omnium animæ functionum cessatio propter compositi dissolutionem.* The passages in this description distinguish Death from Sleep: For in Sleep there is some kind of cessation of the operations of the Soul; some of its operations do cease, or rather are suspended for the present, but not all: For when a man sleeps, his Pulse con-

continues beating, and he continues breathing. These things are more principally necessary for the preserving of Life; as in Winter (which is as it were a sleep of nature) Trees do not grow, neither do they yield forth leaves and fruit, yet they live, as appears by their nourishment; so in sleep a man lives, only some operations of the Soul are suspended, but not all. But the difference between Sleep and Death, is this: In Sleep, some, in Death, all the operations of the Soul do cease. In sleep, the Soul and Body are conjunct, and continue their Union; in death, there is *dissolutio compositi*, man as it were taken in pieces, divided asunder. Death, according to a Theological and Scripture-account, may be thus described; It is the departure of the Soul from the Body; mans going out of one world into another; his removal out of Time into Eternity.

1. Death is sometime called the departure of Soul and Body too out of the World. *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word. Man goes to his long home*, Eccles. 12. 5. *I go the way of all the earth*, said *Joshua*, Josh. 23. 14. And *I go away*, saith our Lord Christ at his death, *John* 16. 5. Here it is to be understood, the *Totum Compositum*, the Soul and Body.

2. Death is called the departure of the Soul from the Body; the death of *Rachel* is thus described, *Gen.* 35. 18, *It came to pass as her soul was departing, for she dyed.*

Now touching Death, we shall prove two things.

1. That Death is appointed as to the certain futurity of it. Here in the Text it is said, *That it is appointed unto all men once to dye.* Ἀπόκειται. [*Hoc loco usurpatur pro statutum, definitum, constitutum est. Scilicet divino consilio ac judicio.* Gerhard. *in* Loc. Theolog.] Death doth not come by chance and accident, [I would be understood

derſtood here in reſpect of God, not man. To man, or in reſpect of man, death doth many times come by chance and accidentally] but it is a matter fore-determined and appointed, *Eccleſ.* 3. 1, 2, *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under the whole heavens*; and in particular, *there is a time to be born, and a time to dye*, Job 7. 1. Job 14. 14. Gods providence reacheth to the ſmalleſt things, the falling of the Leaves from the Trees; the guiding and flying of Arrows; there is nothing in any of theſe caſes, that happens without the ordering, guiding and ſuperintendence of Divine Providence: How much more are the births and deaths of men determin'd by God's Providence? Man is born to dye, as well as to undergo trouble, *Job* 5. 7.

2. That death (as to all the particular circumſtances of it) is fore-appointed and determined by Gods eternal purpoſe.

1. As to the time when a man ſhall dye: It muſt be at ſuch a time, ſuch a day, ſuch an hour, and ſuch a moment, *Job* 14. 5, *Mans days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt ſet his bounds, beyond which he cannot paſs.* A man may eſcape many dangers and ſickneſſes, in a moſt ſtrange and wonderful manner; but when the time appointed is come, away he muſt go.

Object. *But in the caſe of* Hezekiah, *an objection may be ſtarted againſt the Doctrine now delivered. After* Hezekiah *had received a meſſage of death, he upon his prayers and tears receives a quite contrary meſſage; God tells him, he would add unto his days fifteen years; which ſhews that either* Hezekiah's *days were not determined, or elſe that God came to a new appointment.*

Anſw. The Fifteen years added to *Hezekiah*'s Life, were added to *Hezekiah*'s date, not to Gods. *Hezekiah* look'd upon himſelf as a dead man, that he ſhould dye of that very ſickneſs, and ſo in all likelihood did his beſt Phyſicians, for he was ſick of the Plague; but both he and they were deceived: for God in his unchangeable purpoſe, had appointed Fifteen years more unto *Hezekiah*'s Life.

Object. *Solomon ſaith*, Eccleſ. 7. 17, *Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou dye before thy time?*

Anſw. He that dyes before his time, dyes not before the time which God hath determined; an unſeaſonable death to man, doth not prevent Gods ſeaſon: To clear which, we muſt diſtinguiſh about death, which is Two-fold.

Firſt, Natural; *Secondly*, Violent. A man that dyes a violent death, is ſaid to dye before his time which he might have reached unto by the courſe of nature; Sin cuts him off, before God cuts him off: But then God cuts him off for ſin. Thus many dye before their time; and except in this ſenſe, no man dyes before his time. This is *Solomon*'s meaning in that place before mentioned, *Be not overmuch wicked, for why ſhouldeſt thou dye before thy time?* (*H. E.*) Give not up thy ſelf to wickedneſs, leſt the Magiſtrate (who beareth not the Sword in vain) call thee to an account, and ſend thee to the Grave by the hand of Juſtice, before ſickneſs and old Age ſend thee thither.

Object. *It is ſaid in the fifth Commandment*, Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long

(*&c.*)

(Sc.) which carries this threat with it, that if thou diſhonoureſt thy Father and Mother, thy days ſhall be ſhortened: whence it may be argued, that the lengthning and ſhortning of mans days, depends upon his own acting, obedience, or diſobedience; not upon the ſentence or decree of God: For if mans Life cannot be lengthned and ſhortned beyond its ſet time, Where lies the motive or ſtrength of your Argument?

Anſw. To this may be anſwered, That the explicite promiſe of long Life, and implicite threat of ſhortning our days, doth not inforce a mutability of the appointments of God about the date of our days; but only holds forth a token, or evidence, who they are to whom God hath deſigned many days (*viz.*) ſuch as are obedient to their Parents; and who they are to whom God hath deſigned but a few days, (*viz.*) to ſuch as are diſobedient to their Parents; and neither of theſe holds alway and ſimply true, without any exception; but only ordinarily.

Object. *Again*, David *ſaith*, *Pſal.* 55. 23, That bloody and deceitful men, ſhall not live out half their days. *And Pſal.* 89. 45, The days of our youth haſt thou ſhortned. *Now if our days may be halved and ſhortned, then our days are not determined or unalterable.*

Anſw. For anſwer to this, you muſt know (Beloved) that there is a general and ſpecial, or perſonal limit of man's Life.

1. The general Limit is Seventy or Eighty years, *Pſal.* 90. The few exceptions which ſome have made by exceeding this limit, weakens not this general Rule.

2. There is a particular limit upon every perſon; the

limit of one may be Forty years, when another is tied to Thirty, a third to Twenty, a fourth to Five, and a fifth perhaps may be tied to Four years; theſe are ſpecial Limits upon ſpecial men. Now when the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *That a bloody and deceitful man ſhall not live out half his days*; the meaning of it is, that he ſhall not live out half the days of mans general limit: As ſuppoſe a bloody man be cut off at Thirty, he hath not lived out half Seventy or Eighty years, which are the common terms of Life preſcribed unto mankind, beyond which they cannot paſs; but this man lives out all the days of his ſpecial and perſonal limit, or all his days which are appointed as his portion in the Land of the living. Thus the bloodieſt man that is, let him dye when he will, dyes in the particular ſeaſon appointed unto him. The length of our days, be it more or leſs, is by Gods appointment; let us come to the period of our Lives by what way or means ſoever.

Thus for the time When, which is the firſt thing.

2. The next circumſtance I ſhall ſpeak of is, the place Where we muſt (or if you will, rather where we ſhall) dye; this is alſo appointed by God, whether at home or abroad, whether in the field or in the houſe, whether in the lower or upper rooms, whether at table or by the fire-ſide, whether in the bed or in a chair.

God told *Aaron* that he ſhould dye upon the Mount, *Numb.* 20. 26. *Paſhure*, that he ſhould dye in *Babylon*, *Jer.* 20. 6. Chriſt was appointed to accompliſh his deceaſe in *Jeruſalem*; there, and no where elſe, *Luke* 9. 31. and *Acts* 4. 29.

3. As to the manner of dying, or kind of death, *Mille Modi Lethi*, as the Poet ſaith; whether it ſhall be a ſudden or a lingring death, whether it ſhall be a natural or a violent death, whether in Peace or in War, whether by ſick-

ſickneſs (and by what ſickneſs) or by the hand of juſtice; whether by burning at the Stake, hanging on the Gallows, or loſing ones head on the Scaffold, *Iſa.* 22. 18. *Jer.* 11. 12. *Jer.* 34. 5. *Joh.* 12. 31, 32. *Joh.* 21. 19. *Matt.* 23. 34. 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. All theſe circumſtances, I ſay, are appointed, determined, and limited by Gods unchangeable purpoſe.

To ſatisfie us further in the truth of theſe things, I ſhall add the Authority and Teſtimony of a Reverend Father of our Church, not many years ago deceaſed; I mean Biſhop *Hall*, he hath this following paſſage in his Contemplations upon the death of *Moſes*.

Moſes *muſt go up to Mount* Nebo *and dye: the time, the place, and every circumſtance of his diſſolution is determined. That one dyes in the field, another in his bed, another in the water, another in a foreign nation, another in his own, is fore-decreed in Heaven: And though we hear it not vocally, yet God hath called every man by his name, and ſaith, dye thou there. One man ſeems to dye caſually, another by an unexpected violence, both fall by a deſtiny; and all is ſet down to us by an eternal decree. He that brought us into the world, will carry us out according to his own purpoſe.*

Thus far this Holy, Reverend, and Learned Biſhop.

2. The perſons to whom death is appointed (*viz.*) *Men.*

Queſt. *But is it unto all men?*

Anſw. Yes, unto all men; *It is appointed unto men.* This indefinite, is as good as an univerſal propoſition; *It is appointed unto men once to dye.* Be they what they will; Rich or Poor, High or Low, Magiſtrates or People, Strong or Weak, Young or Old, Men, Women, or Children; Wiſe or Fooliſh, Good or Bad, Holy or Unholy; their time is ſet, dye they muſt when that is come, *Pſal.* 89. 48. *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. *Pſal.* 49. 10. *Eccleſ.* 9. 2,

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There is one event to the righteous and the wicked (*q. d.*) both muſt dye, one ſo well as the other. *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?* ſhall not dye? (*q. d.*) There is no ſuch one, *Pſal.* 89. 48. *Rom.* 5. 12.

Queſt. *But what ſhall we think of* Enoch *and* Elias? *we do not read that they dyed, but that they were tranſlated; and one of them mounted up in a fiery Chariot into Heaven?*

Anſw. 1. Particular examples cannot weaken the force of a general Rule. Here are Two examples (*viz.*) *Enoch* and *Elias:* Where can you inſtance in Two more? Notwithſtanding theſe Two, 'tis true, that death is the way of all the earth.

Anſw. 2. Theſe Two were as much liable in themſelves unto the Law of mortality, as the reſt of mankind were; theſe men were ſinners, as well as others, and therefore deſerved to dye: what is ſaid of one of them, is true of both of them; they were men ſubject to like paſſions and infirmities as we are: They had both the moral and natural cauſes and principles of death in them; Sin deſerving, and weakneſs diſpoſing unto death, as well as others. Therefore

Anſw. 3. It was not for their perſonal extraordinary holineſs, but becauſe God had another deſign in it; which was this, God tranſlates *Enoch* and *Elias*, becauſe they were to be Types of Chriſts Reſurrection, and pledges and aſſurances of our Reſurection.

Anſw. 4. Though they did not dye, yet they underwent a change that is equivalent to death; and ſo ſhall they who ſhall not dye, but be changed at the end of the World.

3. But when was death appointed unto men?

To this I anſwer.

1. In the counſel and purpoſe of God it was from all Eter-

Eternity, yet not without reſpect to the Fall.

2. This purpoſe of his was conditionally revealed and threatned in the ſtate of Innocency, before mans fall in Paradice. *In the day that thou eateſt of the tree of knowledg of good and evil, thou ſhalt dye the death* (*h. e.*) thou ſhalt be liable unto death. God drew out Death's Commiſſion before the Fall, but did not ſet his hand and ſeal to it to confirm it.

3. Immediately after the Fall, God ſets his hand and ſeal to this Commiſſion, againſt all mankind, and delivers it into the hands of Death (as I may ſo expreſs my ſelf) as his own act and deed. See to this purpoſe, *Gen.* 3.19.

4. But why, and wherefore is Death thus appointed unto men?

1. For Sins evil.

2. For the Laws breach.

3. For Gods Holineſs, and Infinite hatred againſt Sin.

4. God's inflexible Juſtice, Righteouſneſs, Truth and Holineſs, oblig'd him to it.

1. Sins Evil. Sin is directly againſt God, an offence to God, an affronting of God, a bold trampling upon his Majeſty; it is the defacing of his Image, it is a kind of *deicidium*; as God is the chiefeſt good, ſo ſin is the greateſt evil: No wonder then, that ſo vile a thing as Sin ſhou'd procure Death to ſuch as have committed it. *Death is the wages of ſin, Rom.* 6. 23. Sin is the Devils work, but God is Sins pay-maſter; and the wages due to it is Death. Before Sin entred into the World, there was no ſuch thing as Death; we are beholding unto Sin for Death, which came into the World treading upon the heels of Sin. Sin is the needle that makes way for Death, and for the whole thred of other evils, wherewith the days of our lives are as it were ſewed one unto the other. Doth Sin deface the Image of God, and deſtroy the life of God in man? Yea,

It

it would un-God him, and pluck him from his Throne of Majesty if it could; and is there not reason sufficient the sinner should dye for it?

2. The second Reason is this, For the Laws breach. *He that commits sin, transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law*, 1 *John* 3. 4. This Law was holy, just and good, *Rom.* 7. 12. A Law that was ordained unto Life, a Law of Life, or a Law that promised Life to the fulfillers of it; [*Do this and live.*] And is it not just, that those that break so holy, just and good a Law of Life, should be punished with death for it? That the breakers of it should find that commandment which was ordained unto Life, to be unto them Death.

The third Reason, For God's Holiness sake, and his Infinite hatred against Sin. Sin is the most proper and chief object of God's hatred, and the *Ratio formalis* of God's hating any of his creatures; he hates them not as creatures, but only as sinful creatures; he hates none because poor, deaf, blind, maimed, sick, or men of low parts, or because slighted and despised by men; I say he hates none on these accounts: But much, because they are sinful, and willingly so. Now is there not sufficient Reason and Cause, that such an holy, and sin-hating God, should express his hatred against sin, by appointing the sinner unto a deserved Death?

The fourth Reason; For Gods inflexible Righteousness, Justice, Truth and Faithfulness sake, which do oblige him to appoint sinful mankind unto death. I have sufficiently proved before, That sin deserves death, that death is sins wages, that God is sins pay-master; God hath threatned sin with death, and therefore his Justice, Righteousness, Truth and Faithfulness do oblige him to give sin its wages, by appointing the sinner unto a deserved death.

Object.

Object. *But though there be ſufficient Reaſons, why wicked men ſhould dye; yet what reaſon is there why good men ſhould dye?*

Anſw. Becauſe they have ſin in them, as well as others.

Object. *But it is pardoned to them: why then ſhould they dye?*

Anſw. Such is Gods extream hatred againſt ſin, that he cannot but ſome way or other expreſs it, whereſoever he finds it, though in his deareſt Servants. God will have all the World take notice of it, That he hates ſin, as ſin; not becauſe ſuch a perſon commits it, *Micah* 1. 5, if *Jacob* ſin, *Jacob* ſhall dye for it.

Object. *But righteouſneſs is ſaid to deliver from death*, Prov. 11. 4.

Anſw. This is not to be underſtood of a natural and corporeal death, but of an eternal death; not of the firſt, but of the ſecond death: Grace will priviledg thoſe that have it, from the damnation of Hell, but not from the darkneſs of the Grave; Grace will ſecure the Soul from an eternal ſeparation from God, but it will not ſecure the Body from a temporal ſeparation from the Soul.

Object. *Chriſt hath dyed for them, why then ſhould they dye?*

Anſw. Godly perſons dye not to ſatisfie juſtice, but for other ends.

1. To be freed from ſin, which will not be until death.

2. To eaſe them of their troubles, which will not be till death. Here in this World many are the afflictions of the Righteous, *Pſal.* 34 19; But at death (and not before) they are delivered from all ſin and trouble, *Rev.* 21. 4.

3. That they may go to their Father, Saviour, and home, the habitude and nature of death is changed to them: That which is penal in death, is now gone; death is not a deſtruction to them, but a delivery.

Object. *But it is ſaid, that the righteous periſh* (viz.) *by death*, Iſa. 57. 1, 2.

Anſw. Nothing elſe is intended by it, but this, they dye, they give over living in this World; and this is not to their loſs, but to their great gain and advantage, as it there follows, *They are taken away from the evil to come, They reſt in their beds, each of them walking in his uprightneſs.* If this be periſhing, 'tis good periſhing in this ſenſe. Death is one of the Legacies bequeathed to the Chriſtian by his once dying, but now ever-living Huſband Chriſt Jeſus, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

5. I come now to the laſt thing propounded in my method; namely, what uſe we are to make of it.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, we learn from hence, That death is a thing unavoidable; for if God hath appointed it, who ſhall diſappoint it? Human appointments come to nothing when God is againſt them, but Divine appointments ſhall ſtand, *Pſal.* 33. 10, 11. *Prov.* 19. 21. *Lam.* 3. 37.

There are Two ſorts of Divine appointments,

{ What ſhould be.
{ What ſhall be.

1. What ſhould be: *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is right: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Micah 6. 7, 8. God hath appointed that men ſhould be ſober, temperate, true, honeſt, juſt and ſquare in their dealings; God hath appointed, that men ſhould read, hear, pray, repent, believe, be convicted, and live holily. Theſe appointments of the Divine Majeſty, are dayly diſappointed and violated by wicked and ungodly men.

2. God hath appointed what ſhall be: Of this nature are the things ſpoken of in my Text: God hath appointed, that men muſt dye, and come to judgment; and it is in-

infinitely impoſſible that any of theſe appointments ſhould be fruſtrated: we may as eaſily ſtop the Sun from ſetting, as hinder the Sun of Life from ſetting in death; we may as eaſily prevent the darkneſs of the night from overſpreading the earth, as deliver our ſelves from the darkneſs of the grave.

1. If Beauty could have done it, *Abſolom* had not dyed.

2. If Riches could have done it, the Rich Glutton would not have dyed and gone into Hell, *Luke* 16.

3. If a cunning head-piece could have done it, *Achitophel* had not dyed.

4. If ſtrength of Arms, then *Sampſon*, *Gideon*, *Alexander* the Great, *Cæſar* and *Pompey*, *Cum multis aliis*, had not dyed.

5. If a heart after Gods own heart, then *David* had not dyed.

6. If meekneſs, then *Moſes* had not dyed.

7. If patience, then *Job* had not dyed.

8. If humility, zeal, and abounding in the work of the Lord, could have priviledged from death, St. *Paul* had not dyed.

9. And Laſtly, Yea, the Lord Jeſus, though he had the ſpirit without meaſure, and was free from all ſin, both original and actual, yet death diſſolved the principles of his human nature for a while, and ſent his Soul to Paradice, and his Body to the Sepulchre, *Iſa.* 53. 8, 9.

The Landlord, the greateſt Landlord is but a Tenant for a ſhort term of Life, unto the moſt High Lord of all the World.

The Lawyer, who writes Leaſes for a Thouſand years, muſt yield to death before he hath reached One hundred years.

The Phyſician, who profeſſeth it is his employment to preſerve others lives, muſt when the appointed time is come loſe his own.

The conquering Soldier muſt dye, as well as the conquered enemy who lyes ſlaughtered at his feet.

The Divine who ſhews others the way of Life, muſt at laſt be cut off by Death, *Zach.* 1. 5, *Your fathers where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* No, they muſt dye as well as other men. Though ſome do eſcape out of the hands of Death for a longer ſpace than others do, yet Death meets with them at laſt.

Serius aut Citius metam properamus ad unam: Like *Peter* and *John*, we run who can come firſt to the Sepulchre, and all this happens, becauſe Death is appointed to all men.

Uſe 2. This point doth yield forth unto us a ſingular Argument for Chriſtian patience; when our dear Relations, and Chriſtian Friends are taken away from us by Death, ſhall we murmur and repine at what God hath appointed, and ſay, if this thing had been done, and that thing had been done, (as *Martha* to Chriſt, *If thou hadſt been here*) my Brother, my Father, my Husband, my Wife, my Child had not dyed? Is not this a thwarting of the Doctrine now delivered? Do we forget that both Death it ſelf, and all the particular circumſtances relating to it, are unchangeably appointed by Gods inſuperable power and providence, who worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will? Well then, if God hath appointed theſe things, let not us repine at, and find fault with them; but meekly ſubmit to Gods order, ſaying, either as *Job* 1. 21, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord*; or as the Diſciples, *Acts* 21. 14, *The will of the Lord be done, and meekly and diligently prepare to take our lot:*

Uſe 3. Of reproof of mens ſeldom thoughts of Death. Evidences of it to convince them, are ſuch as theſe.

1. Their ſeldom ſpeeches of Death: *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh.* If there were abundance

bundance of thoughts of death in mens hearts, there would be abundance of ſpeeches about death heard to come out of their mouths; but how ſeldom do we hear men ſpeak of death, unleſs it be at Funerals!

2. Mens ſlight thoughts of ſin. Did men think of the wages, they would have leſs mind to the work. *Death is the wages of ſin.* Therefore it is an Argument men do little think of death, ſeeing they do with *Solomons* Fool make a mock of ſin? Did the Thief and the Murtherer think much of the Gallows, they would not ſo eaſily take thoſe courſes which will bring them to it.

3. Mens reſting in a natural and unregenerate ſtate. Nothing more terrible, than for Death to meet a man in a natural and unregenerate condition; to ſuch an one death is τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *the moſt terrible of terribles:* In ſuch a caſe man is undone for ever.

A man were better to lye down to ſleep in a Chamber all on fire, then willingly to lye down in a carnal ſtate. Where Death meets a man in a carnal ſtate, he kills Body and Soul too; he doth not only divide the Body from the Soul for a while, but he divides alſo the Soul from God for ever; he ſends not only the body to the Grave, but the Soul to Hell.

4. Mens worldlineſs, in the cleaving of their hearts to this preſent World.

5. Mens impatience under Loſſes, Croſſes and Afflictions. *Hold forth faith and patience* (ſaid Sir *John Pickering* a little before his death) *your work is almoſt at an end.* So, did men think that death is appointed, which will put an end to all the troubles of this Life, they would be the leſs troubled at the evils which they meet with here.

Aggravations of theſe ſeldom thoughts of death, are theſe:

1. Nothing more common than death: It is the cuſtom of

of all places for people to dye; whatever they differ in, they agree in this.

2. Nothing more certain than death: you ſee it is appointed by God; and if God hath appointed it, 'tis beyond mans power to alter it.

3. Nothing more uncertain than the time when, the place where, and the manner how we ſhall dye; God only knows this, *Heb.* 1. 7. *Pſal.* 31. 15, our times are in Gods hands.

4. We may dye ſuddenly, be well one hour, and dead the next.

5. Death is one of the weightieſt matters that do concern men; Two things will eaſily and ſufficiently prove it.

Firſt, We can dye but once.

Secondly, We are by death ſtated for Eternity.

1. A man can dye but once; A man may be ſick often, and recover again; but he can dye but once, *Job* 14. 14. If a man dye, ſhall he live again? No, he ſhall not; when he is once out of the World, he ſhall return into it no more. Therefore what is to be done but once, had need be well done; and ſo it cannot, without many thoughts about it. That this dying once had need be a dying well, will eaſily appear, if you conſider what is the next thing.

2. Namely, That when a man is once dead, he is ſtated for Eternity: Though Death ends his Life, as to his Life, yet it doth not end his being: My Text tells you that there is ſomething beyond death, *It is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this* comes *the judgment.* As ſoon as any one is dead, his Soul ſprings immediately into the preſence of the Divine and Eternal Majeſty; and there reckons ſtrictly for his whole Life; after which, he is by an irreverſible doom and ſentence, immediately delivered over into an eternal and unchangeable condition of Happineſs or Miſery, in Heaven or Hell; out of either of which

which, there is no possibility of our coming, as long as God is God; if any thing be amiss one moment after death, there can be no setting of it right again; but the poor creature must suffer for his folly, and unexcusable neglect, the infinite and unquenchable wrath of an eternal God, throughout all eternity: Death doth not end, but change our beings and conditions, *Job* 14. 14, It is called a change, *All the days of mine appointed time will I wait, until my change come.* As the Tree falls, so it lyes, either to the North of Gods Judgment, or to the South of his Mercy. As Death leaves us, so Eternity will hold us for ever. These things duly considered of, do aggravate former neglects, and mightily oblige us to greater care and diligence for the time to come.

Use 4. Well then, in the fourth and last place, let the consideration of these things engage us to be wise, to remember this, and rightly to consider our latter end. As God wisheth us, *Deut.* 32. 29, *So to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*, according as *Moses* prayeth, *Psal.* 90. 12.

To this end let us labour to think of Death,

Frequently.
Seriously.
Applicatively.
Purposingly and Providingly.

1. Let us labour to think of Death frequently, not only at such a time as this, when you see or hear of one dead, or are hearing of a Funeral-Sermon; but at other times; yea, more or less every day, *Tota vita sit mortis meditatio.*

1. When you see the Sun setting, think that very shortly the Sun of your lives will set upon you, never more to rise again upon you. Till the morning of your resurrection, your place will know you no more.

2. When

2. When you feed upon the creatures at your Tables, Oh think, that very ſhortly the crawling Worms will be ſweetly feeding, and feaſting themſelves upon our carkaſes in the grave.

3. When you put off your Clothes at night, and go into the Bed, think that you muſt ſhortly put off this earthly Tabernacle of your bodies; bid adieu for ever to whatſoever you could call your own in this World, Houſes, Lands, Gardens, Orchards, Horſes, Cows, Sheep, Corn, Money, Husband, Wife, Children, Friends; I ſay, think that ſhortly you muſt be ſtript of all this, home to your ſhirt, to your winding ſheet, and go to your Graves, as into your Beds; and never wake more, until the morning of your Reſurrection. Oh! Walk and talk more or leſs with Death every day; the better acquainted you are with Death now, the leſs terrible he will be unto you, when he comes to ſerve his Commiſſion upon you, and tranſlate you into Eternity.

2. Think upon Death ſeriouſly, How can you do otherwiſe, if you rightly underſtand what Death is? It doth not end, but change the ſtate and condition of your Bodies; it drives you out of one World into another; out of a Temporal, into an Eternal World. Death will prove a bottomleſs Grave, either to your ſins and ſorrows, or to your Souls comfort and happineſs: It will cut you off for ever, either from the fears of Hell, or from your hopes of Heaven. It will deliver you unto Judgment, and Judgment will deliver you over eternally and unchangeably, either to Heaven or Hell: And thoſe are the matters to be careleſly conſidered of. How can you think upon ſuch grave, weighty, and infinitely important things without abundance of ſeriouſneſs? It muſt needs make thy heart quake, if thou art wicked, or doubtful whether thy caſe be a Caſe of Salvation, to think upon death with any deliberation.

3. Think

3. Think upon Death Applicatively. Think upon your own death; bring home your thoughts of death unto your own caſe. General thoughts of Death will do you no good. Oh think, that there is an unavodiable time coming, when you your ſelves muſt dye; when all the Money & Friends you have, and all the skill of Phyſicians will be infinitely unable to deliver you out of the hands of death. Conſider to this purpoſe, what I have ſaid before in the clearing and proving of this Doctrine, and bring it down to your own particular caſe, by a cloſe and applying meditation. And that you may the better do it with profit and advantage, be ſure that you call in Gods help to the work: *Except the Lord build the City, they labour in vain who build it.* Put up *David's* prayer, *Pſal.* 39. 4, *Lord teach me to know mine end, and the number of my days, that I may know how frail I am.* And *Moſes* his Petition, *Pſal.* 90. 12, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* Oh! think, how very ſhortly it will be ſaid of you (as you have often heard ſaid of others) that you are dead, and your deareſt Friends will be weeping together, and bewailing the loſs of your company. Oh! think, that ſhortly your grave will be digged, and your dead Bodies laid up by your Friends in it; as now this office is done towards our deceaſed Brother. Oh! think that ſhortly I ſhall ſee man no more here upon earth; but the face of my Judg, hear my doom, and be an eternal Companion, either with Chriſt, the holy Ghoſt, Saints and Angels in everlaſting Glory; or an eternal Companion with Devils and damned Souls in everlaſting Torments.

4. And Laſtly, Think upon Death preparingly and providingly, or elſe whatever thoughts of Death you may have, will come to nothing. This is the end of all the other: The end of your frequent ſerious Applicatory

thoughts of death ſo, that you may prepare and provide againſt it. And truly this I hope is the end of my preaching, and ſhould be the end of your hearing. Therefore give me leave to ſpeak ſomething to you, but very briefly, by way of direction how to prepare for Death; and then I ſhall conclude my Sermon.

1. *Direction*, Do that upon your ſelves in life, which God will do upon you at death: And that is, judg your ſelves; for God will judg you at death. My Text tells you this; Oh! therefore prevent God; ſet up a Quarter-Seſſions in your own Souls; let Conſcience be Accuſer, Witneſs and Judg; Judg your ſelves, and ſo you ſhall not be judged, as to be condemned by the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31: many do juſtifie themſelves, and raſhly cenſure, judg and condemn others; theſe perſons take a prepoſterous courſe to prepare for death: but do you contrary, be charitable in judging others, ſevere in judging your ſelves.

2. *Direction*, Get the ſting of death (which is ſin) taken out by repentance, and making your peace with God; Oh, labour to bury your ſins, before death doth bury your Bodies.

1. Labour to bury the love of ſin in the grave of Repentance, by getting hearts weaned from ſin, and incenſed with implacable indignation againſt it.

2. Bury the guilt of ſin, in the grave of Gods bottomleſs mercies, and Chriſt's boundleſs merits, by apprehending and applying the promiſes of Mercy and Pardon, *Iſa.* 55. 7.

3. Bury the power of ſin in the grave of Regeneration. Sin will be a very horrible companion to go with you out of the World; therefore rid your ſelves as much as you can of it in your life time: Make your peace with God, whileſt thou art in the way, whileſt thou art here; acquaint

quaint your ſelves with God, and be at peace: So, much good will come to you by death; elſe death will be infinitely terrible to you.

3. *Direction*, Get an intereſt in Chriſt, labour with St. *Paul* to be found in him, not having on our own righteouſneſs which is of the Law; but that which is by Faith, even the righteouſneſs of God by faith, *Phil.* 3. 9. Death will be very terrible to Chriſtleſs perſons, *John* 3. 18, 36. *John* 8. 24. *Mark* 16. 16.

4. *Direction*, Get Grace and Holineſs into your hearts and lives, elſe when you dye you will be undone for ever, *John* 3. 3. *Acts* 3. 19. *Heb.* 12. 14. Mr. *Bolton* ſaid, on his Death-bed to his Children, That he hoped none of them durſt think of meeting him at that great Tribunal, in an unregenerate ſtate.

5. *Direction*, Buckle your ſelves to an Holy Life, *Heb.* 12. 14.

6. *Direction*, Make even accounts with God every day. Conſtant and even accounts make long friends. I am ſure it is ſo here. As thou doſt renew thy ſins, ſo labour every day to renew repentance for, and from ſin; and renew Faith in the Blood of Chriſt: This is the way to make God and you long friends.

7. *Direction*, Count every day your laſt day.

Omnem crede diem tibi diluxiſſe ſupremum.

And ſeeing every day may prove our laſt day, we have need to ſtrive, that every day may prove our beſt day; and as we grow in years, ſo to grow in grace and vertue.

8. *Direction*, And Laſtly, ſend dayly more and more of your affections to Heaven; labour with the Apoſtle to dye dayly, 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. The way to live when we dye, is to be dying whileſt we live: To be dying dayly. Death is not ſo ſtrong to thoſe, whoſe natural ſtrength hath been waſted with ſickneſs, as to thoſe that have been but few days

days ſick. The more weaned your hearts are from the World now, the more eaſie will your paſſage out of the World be then. The more your hearts are ſet upon Heaven in your life-time, the more willing you will be, that your Souls ſhould go thither at your death.

Do this, and live for ever. Amen.

FINIS.